

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Amend the title as follows:

**METHOD FOR FORMING TTO NITRIDE LINER FOR IMPROVED COLLAR
PROTECTION AND TTO RELIABILITY**

Amend the paragraph starting at page 9, line 6, with the following replacement paragraph.

Figure 2(b) illustrates the deposition of the TTO HDP oxide 28 (using non-conformal deposition process, for example) over the TTO nitride liner 50. Figure 3 is a detailed illustration of the resulting channel structure if optional sacrificial oxide layer 60 is formed prior to nitride liner deposition 50. Figure 3 shows that the sacrificial oxide layer 50 is formed above horizontal surfaces of the deep trench conductors 22 and over exposed sidewalls and collar oxide regions 18. As known to skilled artisans, sacrificial oxide layer thickness may vary depending upon the formation process and the oxide material. According to the invention, the optional sacrificial oxide layer thickness may range anywhere from about 2.0 to 20.0 nm.